



An Event Marking an Epoch in the Development of the West

Now 33,000 ACRES,
\$750,000 WORTH OF
LAND IS TO BE CLOSED OUT
BY A TRUSTEE IN A DAY

C. M. GRUENTHER,
TRUSTEE.

That's the sign hanging outside the office at 307 First National bank building in Omaha. The offices are occupied by the man who is planning the most stupendous land sale outside of those conducted by the United States government.

C. M. Gruenther is his name. He's a young man, too, to be acting as trustee charged with the disposition of nearly \$750,000 worth of rich land. Aside from this there's a reason—a cause and effect—for everything. Mr. Gruenther has already made good on similar trusteeships, that's why he was called to Colorado to assume this important position.

In Columbus, Neb., his home, the man Gruenther is held in high esteem. Not like the prophet, whose words of wisdom are best appreciated where he is unknown, Mr. Gruenther has been lifted by his townsmen to clerk of the court at Columbus, an important position for any man to hold. For his knowledge of trusteeships and his successful record in big land deals, closing large estates and the like, he is sought by attorneys and to act under direction of courts far and wide.

In the First National bank building, he is at a big desk, where everything moves forward under his personal direction. The immense tract is to be sold at auction, and Mr. Gruenther's aim is to clean up the whole 33,000 acres in a day. The immensity of his undertaking can hardly be appreciated. It is stupendous.

From this plain, honest-looking man, the plan of disposition must be evolved. His stenographic dictation is constantly interrupted to answer important questions, meet men, hear their story and give his decision. Then back to his work.

Men are fast learning that here is one great chance to buy land that has been off the market under private control until the surrounding country has become built up. Here can be had dear land at a cheap price.

Thousands have become wealthy through investments in good, cheap land. Land that has good soil, good climate, and good prospects for future gain by an increase in its intrinsic value.

This big tract was owned by A. W. Winegar. Three years ago, Mr. Winegar lived in Omaha, had spacious offices in the New York Life building, and used many full page advertisements for his Kit Carson county lands near Burlington, in eastern Colorado. At that time his lands became involved in litigation, which necessitated the closing of his offices, for the court would not allow any more sales. Mr. Winegar succeeded in bringing about a settlement of all trouble and all the land, 33,000 acres nearly \$750,000 worth, will be sold at auction June 23 at Burlington, Colo., by the trustee, C. M. Gruenther.

Eastern Colorado, particularly that part of it served by the Rock Island, has fully established itself as an agricultural region of high quality. If anything was lacking to prove such a claim it was supported last year when crops were raised that equaled those produced in any farming section. Eastern Colorado farmers have demonstrated that dry farming is an exact science and there is absolutely no need for crop failure, especially since the United States government records show the average rainfall at Burlington for the past six years is almost sixteen inches, two-thirds coming during the growing season. Many farmers near Burlington and Stratton showed production of thirty bushels of wheat to the acre. The 33,000 acres to be sold by the trustee at auction are right near the town of Burlington.

Title is Clear—Land Fertile.

When Mr. Gruenther consented to talk this is what he had to say about this unusual method to be used to turn this tract into cash:

"I have been appointed as trustee to sell 33,000 acres of farm land in Kit Carson county, Colorado. I will sell this land at public auction to the highest bidder in the opera house at Burlington, Colorado, beginning at 8 a. m. Thursday, June 23, 1910. The land will be sold on easy terms in small parcels, tracts of 100 acres to 320 acres. The man of small means will have the same show to purchase his 100 acres at a low price per acre as the man whose means enable him to buy large acreages. The terms of sale are exceptionally easy. It will be conveyed by warranty deed, abstracts furnished and title guaranteed. Formerly it was owned by the Kit Carson Land company of Burlington, Colorado, and was controlled by Mr. A. W. Winegar of that city. It has been tied up by litigation during the last three years and could not be sold. Now the litigation has been settled and I have been directed to sell the land.

"Before accepting the responsibility attending this trusteeship I made a careful examination of the land and a personal inspection of conditions in Kit Carson county. Kit Carson county is practically in the center of the continent, in the rain belt of

eastern Colorado, on the main line of the Rock Island railroad between Omaha and Denver. On the outside cover of this announcement is a map showing its location near the Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska state lines," and he held up a little booklet which he is sending out free.

"I found Kit Carson county a beautiful prairie, lying in level stretches for miles and miles. I found it to be the best grain producing county in eastern Colorado. Its citizens claim it to be the best agricultural county in the state and have the awards to show that Kit Carson county has carried off more special prizes and sweepstakes at state and interstate agricultural exhibitions than any other county in the mid-western states. It is in the rain belt of eastern Colorado and grows its crop wholly with natural rainfall. The rainfall is ample for maturing all general crops under proper cultivation.

"While examining the land I was greatly impressed with the fact that I was never out of sight of well improved, prosperous farms with growing crops. This land is distributed throughout the territory tributary to Burlington and Stratton, a territory that is well settled, where lands are selling rapidly at \$10 to \$20 per acre. By far the greatest number of quarters lay from four to eight miles from town. Some of them are as far away from present railroad towns as fifteen miles, but the distances do not seem great on account of the country being so level and the roads good. Another thing that impressed me was the remarkable uniformity of the land—one quarter being practically as good as another, with no difference in the real value except that of location, the quarters that are closest to town naturally being worth a little more than those farther out, you know.

"The soil on all the land is as good as I ever examined. The surface soil is a dark loam, varying in depth from two to three feet, underlaid to a great depth with a porous clay subsoil, just the kind for conserving moisture. An abundant flow of pure water is found at a depth of from 25 to 35 feet.

"Another thing that impressed me was the opportunity that is here for obtaining first-class farm land at a low price without being obliged to go to the frontier for it. For three years nothing could be done with this land on account of the litigation. It was the first choice of the early settlers and the first land taken up in that community. It has been idle during the years while the adjoining land was being sold to thirty easterners and developed. The litigation is now settled and the land must be sold. The whole 33,000 acres—a veritable empire in itself—is to be brought under the hammer and sold at this sale. There is so much of it to be sold that it can hardly be hoped that it will bring what it is worth. There are bound to be many bargains and downright snags for buyers who will be there. In my opinion, this is the best opportunity that has been placed before the American people to get good land, well located, with every prospect of being able to get it for less than it is worth.

"I am well versed in land values and have made a specialty for a number of years in selling land at auction under legal procedure and have sold thousands of acres. I want to say that in all my experience I have never seen a body of land offered for sale that would compare with this in quality, productiveness and location as compared to the price it can be reasonably hoped to bring. We have taken every precaution for the comfort of those in attendance at this sale. A special Pullman train will be run from Omaha to the sale and return. Ample conveyances by automobile and teams will be provided free of charge to convey the people out to inspect the land so that it all can be seen before the sale commences."

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Located in Center of Continent.

The soil is a dark loam from one to four feet deep, with a good clay subsoil, free from rock, sand or gravel. There is practically no waste land in any part, the land lying almost level. Kit Carson county is unique in its location, being almost in the territorial center of the continent. It has unsurpassed market facilities. On the east are the great packing markets of Omaha, St. Joseph and Kansas City, with their great packing plants and immense grain elevators, on the west Denver and Pueblo, the gateways to all the vast mines of Colorado and their ever increasing markets.

The development of the country in the past few years has been very rapid. In 1906 there were thirty-eight school districts, with thirty-eight school houses, the majority of them being sod. Two years later there were forty-four districts, with sixty school houses. The greater part of the new school houses are frame and a number of the old sod school houses have been replaced by up-to-date buildings. In 1906 there were forty-three teachers in the county and in 1908 there were seventy-three. Today the number far exceeds this.

Not only have the schools increased in number, but the standard has been raised until now it is entirely up to that of any section.

The population of the county has naturally increased with the other developments. There are now about 10,000 people in the county, while four years ago there were

less than 3,000. At the November election, 1906, there were 885 votes polled, while now the county has over 4,500 voters.

Substantial Homes and Schools.

In driving over the country one notices a large number of new, modern homes, the old sod houses having been torn down. The county has built an elegant court house, modern throughout and up to date in every respect, costing about \$20,000. It is paid for in full and the county has no bonded debt.

Wheat, rye, barley, oats, millet, alfalfa, all these and more, are very productive. Many of the fields of corn in the past five years have ranged from twenty to forty-five bushels per acre.

Corn is grown more or less in all sections of the state. It is grown extensively in the nonirrigated sections of eastern Colorado. A number of large ranches harvested forty bushels of corn to the acre without other water than the seasonable rainfall.

There can be three crops of alfalfa raised and it is profitable not only for the hay, but also for the seed, similar land in this locality having produced in a number of instances six bushels per acre. This seed readily sells for \$10 per bushel. In five years this portion of Colorado may be the leading locality in the United States in the production of alfalfa.

One must understand that this was formerly a short buffalo grass country and that the land, lying for ages in this manner, being used principally for stock industry, had become very hard, the buffalo grass forming a thick coat over the soil, making it almost impossible for the rainfall to penetrate the ground, unless very slow and protracted. Being smooth and mildly rolling, it ran off into the small ravines and valleys and sank away. Old residents say that since the land is in cultivation and moisture can sink into the earth as it falls, it has caused a damper atmosphere and plenty of moisture in all cases to raise a crop.

All sorts of vegetables thrive and are a profitable crop. Any kind grown east may be raised on this vast tract. Potatoes are very prolific and are of good quality.

Fruits do well, especially peaches, cherries, strawberries, gooseberries, currants, etc. Plums grow rapidly and prolific.

There are several towns in the county, the largest being Burlington, which is the county seat; it is thriving and growing

rapidly. Burlington has four general stores, two hardware and furniture stores, two banks, two drug stores, three or four hotels, two or three restaurants, three livery barns, two weekly newspapers, an elevator or two and two lumber yards. The town has a local telephone system and has long distance connections with cities and towns all over the country.

The water is pure as crystal, soft and never failing. It is to be had at a depth of from twenty-five to 35 feet, this being determined by the lay of the land.

The climate is delightful and healthful. Winters are mild, there being at least nine months in the year that one may plow.

Grasses grow wild. One of our most important features is what is known as wheat grass of spontaneous growth. There is also the buffalo and grama grasses. Alfalfa is being raised and is proving one of the best crops that can be raised.

The section is full of cattle, horses and mules. Hogs thrive and do well, not being subject to chills. Not a case of cholera has been reported there. Chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys, also, seem immune from the many pests. Stock does not suffer and is easily wintered, it being necessary to take but few extra precautions to protect the cattle during the winter months. Dairying is an important industry. The ordinary cow averages from \$2 to \$4 per month for butter fat from grass alone.

Since the 5-cent rate through Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa and Illinois the cost of going long distances is very small. The distance from market towns is not great. Burlington is just 107 miles east of Denver and 121 miles east of Colorado Springs, and only one night's travel from Omaha or Kansas City.

Kit Carson county carried away some great honors at fairs and such gatherings last winter. At Denver and Pueblo, combined, the county carried away fifty-one first premiums, thirty-eight second premiums and three of the first class. This list was bigger than that from any other three counties in the state.

Strong at Dry Farming Congress.

The Dry Farming Congress was one place where Kit Carson county showed up very strong. The state as a whole won at that event the grand international sweepstakes, fifty-three premiums and five sweepstakes. Of this imposing number Kit Carson county's display took twenty-eight premiums and captured two

sweepstakes, one of the latter being for the best individual exhibit and the other for the best group exhibit. The state's display placed at the National Agricultural Exposition in Omaha attracted attention as any other exhibit.

This year conditions point to a repetition of all last year's gains, and even better things. Each year finds the farmer better qualified to solve the problems of the work, thus insuring greater success. The increase in cultivated area near Burlington, or rather in Burlington's trade area, will be close to 50 per cent. A number of steam plows are being kept busy getting the sod turned over.

Experiment Stations.

A most important work is carried on at the Colorado Experiment station in connection with the agricultural college at Fort Collins. This work embraces many branches of cereal and forage culture for the determination of their best adaptation to the climate and soil of the arid and semi-arid country. One of the results is the organization of many new varieties of wheat and other grains to the end of continued improvement with each generation. The benefits of the various kinds and classes of experimentation accrue to the farmers and live stock growers of the state in many ways. Through the efforts of the station and frequent publications of the college the farmers receive instruction in intensive and scientific soil cultivation and the lessons promulgated are made to apply in each particular case. Fruit, grass or root crop for its most profitable grown by most profitable returns, whether from the markets or from the feed values of the products to the live stock industry.

These, and many other things for the advancement of all agricultural interests of the state, are the purposes to which the Agricultural Experiment station at Fort Collins is devoted, and much of the splendid progress which has been made, and a large share of the general prosperity are creditable to this institution.

An Authority on Dry Farming.

W. B. Forbes, who has probably done more farming than any other man in Colorado, may be regarded as an authority upon dry farming. Few seasons ago he cultivated over 1,000 acres for himself and for others under contract. All of this was without irrigation. Mr. Forbes lives at

Longmont, Colo., the center of the highest-irrigated farms in the state, but he prefers to farm in the dry belts where he

uses two steam plows breaking sod, double ditching and drilling in wheat. One year he farmed 600 acres on his own account, sowing thirty pounds of Red Russian wheat to the acre—the following year this amount was increased to fifty pounds to the acre. On other similar lands Mr. Forbes farmed 1,150 acres, planting Red Russian, which threshed out fifty-four pounds to the bushel. On that ground he sowed forty-five to fifty pounds to the acre and will undoubtedly duplicate this achievement in eastern Colorado this year.

"I think," says Mr. Forbes, "there is more profit in dry farming than any other business in Colorado. When you come to pay ditch assessments, taxes and labor on irrigated land you cannot secure the same results. I know what I am talking about for I own 100 acres of irrigated land near Longmont and prefer to farm in the dry belt. I have been dry farming for seven years and I know the soil can not be beaten. It is nice sandy loam with about 20 per cent sand—enough to cut it and make it easy for handling. The best way for a farmer who is sowing winter wheat is not to get it in too early. He should wait until after the middle of September and the passing of the early rains. In that way his wheat is not likely to sprout. J. Y. Murchison has this sowing in September, October, November and December and what he sowed in December yielded better than the earlier planting.

"Five years dry farming should give a man a fortune if he goes about it right. My system is to plow in June, double ditch in September and seed about the end of November or the first of October. This should give a yield of forty to fifty bushels per acre."

Even though one does not buy, a trip out there will pay for itself, because it offers an excellent opportunity to see the wonderful development in that portion of the Colorado grain belt. A knowledge can be gained that every one should possess. There is much satisfaction in buying real estate at auction, because one gets the benefit of the judgment of others who are bidding, and almost universally land sold at auction goes at a lower figure than at private sale. This is especially true when, as in this case, so much land must and will be sold to the highest bidder, regardless of price.

